

HONORING TAYLOR BURTCH

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the service of Taylor Burch, my fellow who has worked to improve our Nation's education system. Taylor has proven to be a talented and intelligent policy analyst, always ready to take on any task and apply her knowledge.

Taylor assisted my education policy team, where she worked on legislation, partook in stakeholder meetings, and considered various ways to improve education and teacher assistance. She is a detailed and focused professional with the ability to excel in her projects.

Originally from Dundee, Michigan, Taylor completed her bachelor's degree in Women's Studies at the University of Toledo and her master's degree in Gender and Sexualities Research at the University of Florida. Currently, Taylor is a doctoral candidate at the University of Florida. She will receive her PhD in Higher Education Administration and Policy after successfully defending her dissertation, which focuses on the exploration of college trajectories among young persons with adverse childhood experiences, in the Summer of 2023. Taylor will use her passion for education equity to continue her policy research and advocate for improve conditions for marginalized communities.

The first fellow to serve in the University of Florida's Legislative Education Fellows program, Taylor has made my office proud to receive the university's inaugural fellow.

On behalf of Florida's 24th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Taylor Burch for her inevitable success.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
RYAN COONERTY ON HIS
RETIREMENT

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of Santa Cruz County's Third District Supervisor, Ryan Coonerty, who is retiring after serving two terms as a Member of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.

Ryan Coonerty has a long and distinguished history of public service. He served twice as the Mayor of the City of Santa Cruz, and was first elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2014. He hosts a podcast, An Honorable Profession, and co-founded NextSpace Co-working and Innovation, serves as a lecturer on law and government at U.C. Santa Cruz, and co-wrote *The Rise of the Naked Economy*.

As a Santa Cruz County Supervisor, Ryan worked to create affordable housing, expanded public safety programs, voter access and family health. He is a respected leader on environmental issues and opposed offshore oil and gas drilling. He is a steadfast supporter of women's rights and LGBTQIA+ equality, and an advocate for local immigrant families.

Supervisor Coonerty has been a leader on the Board of Supervisors in bringing forward proposals to address post CZU Fire issues, such as the creation of the Office of Response, Recovery and Resilience, initiating a debris clearance process, and more recently, addressing permitting and rebuilding challenges. While the fire was burning, he put out an email newsletter almost daily to keep residents informed.

Ryan and I have worked together on North Coast issues, especially balancing tourism with control over traffic, noise, and trash. He helped set up the North Coast Multi-Agency Working Group, which I'm an ex-officio member of.

Ryan has received many honors, among them his selection as a Rodel Fellow in Public Leadership by the Aspen Institute as one of "the nation's most promising young elected officials". He was honored as a Community Hero by the Red Cross of Santa Cruz County, and Advocate of the Year by the United Way of the County.

Ryan Coonerty is a graduate of the University of Oregon's Clark Honors College, the London School of Economics, and earned his law degree from the University of Virginia. He and his wife Emily reside in Santa Cruz with their children Daisy and Kellan.

Madam Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in thanking Ryan Coonerty for his exemplary service and wishing him every blessing in the next chapter of his life. Because of his superb leadership we are a better community and a stronger country.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF BOBBY SILVERSTEIN

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and legacy of Bobby Silverstein, a devoted public servant who made monumental progress advancing disability rights. Over the span of a career serving both chambers of Congress, Bobby worked behind the scenes to deliver countless wins for the disability community. Notably, he played a pivotal role in the development and enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act during his time serving as staff director and chief counsel for Senator Harkin's Disability Policy Subcommittee.

Every person deserves to live and age with dignity, and this was a principal Bobby committed himself to every day. Bobby will be remembered for his compassion, track record of success, and passion for giving a voice to those who feel forgotten, and these sentiments are shared by his colleague and friend, Peter Thomas, who spoke at Bobby's memorial service. In honor of Bobby, I include in the Record Peter's speech.

REMARKS OF PETER W. THOMAS AT BOBBY
SILVERSTEIN'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

Like the bright sun on this crisp fall afternoon, Bobby Silverstein shines his light on us today.

Good afternoon. I'm Peter Thomas, Managing Partner of Powers law firm in Washington, DC.

If the measure of a person's life is the number who mourn his or her passing, then Bobby Silverstein knocked life out of the park.

There are no words to express the depth of loss we all feel. I usually take Bobby's lead and try to speak diplomatically, rather than bluntly, but you can't sugarcoat this. Bobby's untimely passing is a dagger. It's a gut punch that will be felt for a long time to come.

But we would not have learned from Bobby if we did not focus on the positive. The impact his life had on so many. The love he spread throughout his life and the fact that we are all better off for knowing him.

As we approach Thanksgiving, let us recognize those who can be thankful for Bobby Silverstein and all he did to improve the lives of people with disabilities:

1. If you have a child with an intellectual or developmental disability (IDD), think about thanking Bobby.

2. If someone you know needed special education and an individualized education plan (IEP), think about thanking Bobby.

3. If you can access public services and transportation despite your disability, think about thanking Bobby.

4. If you are employed as a person with a disability, Bobby probably deserves your thanks.

5. If you benefitted from research on rehabilitation, disability, and independent living, thank Bobby Silverstein.

6. If you are relying on this interpreter or using closed captioning on this livestream, Bobby played a role and is worthy of thanks.

7. I could go on, but the magnitude of the positive impact Bobby had on our lives is truly astounding.

Bobby was my partner at Powers' health care and disability practice for the past 15 years. What an honor and privilege it is to have shared his space on this earth; to have shared a front-row seat in his work on behalf of the people he devoted his professional life to; individuals with disabilities.

I first met Bobby in 1989 while I was in law school trying to pass legislation to establish a prosthetics research program to help people with limb loss, like myself. Bobby was working for Senator Tom Harkin's Disability Policy Subcommittee as staff director and chief counsel. I was no one, and I was very nervous.

Bobby was gracious but serious and direct. He told me the Claude Pepper Act for Amputees, as the bill was known, had little chance of passing because it was "not integrated into the disability policy framework." That probably sounds familiar to some of you but I scratched my head. He said he could not be supportive of legislation to help amputees alone at the exclusion of others with disabilities in similar circumstances.

Long story short, in the end, and with much help from Bobby, the bill enacted into law the following year created the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMR) at NIH. The center's mission is medical rehabilitation research writ large, but the law includes specific mention of prosthetics research and development. The center has been a major funder of prosthetics research for over 30 years which, of course, accomplished the original goal of the Claude Pepper bill but did it in a way that was, in fact, integrated into the disability policy framework.

I learned a great deal from that experience that I have put to use throughout my career, and in life. I know many others who have had the same experience when they came into Bobby's orbit.

In fact, one of Bobby's most blessed gifts was to those who sought his guidance. Bobby was an exceptional mentor to those with and